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metallic reflector layer and a continuous conductive layer that makes ohmic contact through a uniform conducting sheet to the heterostructure; and

wherein the multi-layer contact has a reflectivity greater than 75% for light at an operating wavelength of the light-emitting device.

3. A device, as defined in claim 1, wherein the multi-layer contact has a specific contact resistance less than $10^{-2}\Omega\text{-cm}^2$.

4. A device, as defined in claim 1, the multi-layer contact further comprising a barrier layer interposing the reflector layer and the conductive layer.

5. A device, as defined in claim 1, wherein the reflector layer has a thickness greater than 500 Å.

6. A device, as defined in claim 1, wherein the conductive layer that makes ohmic contact to the heterostructure has a thickness less than 200 Å.

7. A device, as defined in claim 1, wherein the reflector layer is selected from the group consisting of Al, Cu, Rh, Pd, and Au.

8. A device, as defined in claim 1, wherein the p and n contacts are on opposing faces of the heterostructure.

9. A device, as defined in claim 8, wherein the conductive layer that makes ohmic contact to the heterostructure includes Ni and Ag.

10. A device, as defined in claim 8, wherein the reflector layer is Ag.

11. (Three times Amended) A light-emitting semiconductor device comprising:
a GaN-based semiconductor heterostructure having at least one p-type and one n-type layer; and

a p contact and an n contact, the p contact electrically connected to the p-type layer, the n contact electrically connected to the n-type layer, wherein at least one of the p and n

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contacts is a multi-layer contact external to the semiconductor heterostructure and including a metallic reflector layer and a continuous conductive layer that makes ohmic contact through a uniform conducting sheet to the heterostructure;

wherein the multi-layer contact has a reflectivity greater than 75% for light at an operating wavelength of the light-emitting device.

13. A device, as defined in claim 11, wherein the multi-layer contact has a specific contact resistance less than $10^{-2}\Omega\text{-cm}^2$.

14. A device, as defined in claim 11, the multi-layer contact further comprising a barrier layer interposing the reflector layer and the conductive layer.

15. A device, as defined in claim 11, the reflector layer having a thickness greater than 500Å.

16. A device, as defined in claim 11, the conductive layer that makes ohmic contact to the heterostructure having a thickness less than 200 Å.

17. A device, as defined in claim 11, the reflector layer being selected from the group consisting of Al, Cu, Rh, Pd, and Au.

18. A device, as defined in claim 11, wherein the conductive layer that makes ohmic contact to the heterostructure is selected from the group that consists of Ti, Au/NiO, and Ni/Au.

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